

CITY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

**The Prince and the Librarian:  
The context and significance of the reforms  
to the Royal Library at Windsor Castle  
under Prince Albert.**

David Baker

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of MSc in Library Science

January 2019

Supervisor: Dr Lyn Robinson

## **Abstract**

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In 1860 the newly-appointed librarian of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, Bernard Bolingbroke Woodward, drew up a series of ambitious plans aimed at reforming the organisation and administration of the collection. The work carried out on the library during this period included the introduction of a subject-based classification system and the first concerted attempts made to produce a library catalogue. Woodward's redevelopment of the library was undertaken at the express behest of Prince Albert, the Prince Consort, and, in several aspects, under his direct influence. This study examines the historical contexts and influences that went into shaping the redevelopment of the library in the 1860s, with a view towards gaining a more detailed understanding of rationale behind the plans for the reorganisation of this collection. The research is carried out through an historical study by means of extended review of the secondary literature, together with a close analysis of the major primary sources in the form of reports produced by Woodward in which he details his vision and his recommendations for the library. The historical connections to other contemporary libraries are mapped, and the context also sought for the classification scheme introduced by the Prince Consort.

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## Acknowledgements

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I would like, above all, to express my immense gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Lyn Robinson, for her great patience, wisdom and wit throughout the duration of my work on this project, and throughout my time as a part of the CityLIS family. My thanks must also go to Professor David Bawden for his guidance and good humour over the course the last two years, as well as to all those individuals, too numerous to mention, who have contributed so much to making me feel a valued part of the community at City, University of London.

I am very grateful also to my former colleagues at the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, and especially to Emma Stuart, Bridget Wright, and Oliver Walton, all of whom have been extremely generous in sharing their time and expertise with me at various stages of my thinking about Prince Albert and libraries.

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, who have been unfailingly supportive of me both financially and morally over many difficult years, and to my wonderful *heorðwerod*, Nicola and Edmund, without whom this whole process would have been at once a whole lot less challenging and a whole lot less enjoyable.

David Baker

January 2019

# I. Introduction

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## I.1 Background

The Royal Library at Windsor Castle, the official library of the British monarch, has a complex history. Administered today as part of the Royal Collection Trust—the charitable organisation set up in 1993 to oversee the management and curation of the various art collections belonging to the British Crown<sup>1</sup>—the library was first established in 1830s by King William IV (1765-1837, reigned 1830-7). At the time of its establishment, the library was in fact the third in a series of royal libraries to have existed. The first, which had represented the book collections amassed by successive English monarchs from the fifteenth century onwards (the so-called ‘Old Royal Library’), had been transferred to the nascent British Museum in 1757 by William’s great-grandfather, King George II (1683-1760, reigned 1727-60). The second, the vast library collected by his father, King George III (1738-1820, reigned 1760-1820), known as the ‘King’s Library’, had been given to the Museum some years previously in the 1820s by his predecessor and brother, King George IV (1762-1830, reigned 1820-30). In the course of time, both of these collections have gone on to become integral parts of the British Library, the national library of the United Kingdom. In the same way, many other formerly royal book collections elsewhere in Europe have developed into state-owned, national libraries in their respective countries (Manning 2015).

While the existence of the collection now known as the Royal Library is down to King William IV, almost all of its present character and appearance is the direct result of reforms introduced by Prince Albert (1819-61), husband and consort to William’s successor, Queen Victoria (1819-1901, reigned 1837-1901), in collaboration with the newly-appointed Royal Librarian, Bernard Bolingbroke Woodward (1816-69). The plans drawn up by these two men, and implemented from the autumn of 1860 onwards, had a profound and lasting influence on the collection, its organisation and its future development, and included (among other things) the introduction of a subject-based classification system into the library and a concerted attempt to compile a catalogue. Despite the Prince Consort’s untimely death at the age of forty-two in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rct.uk>

December 1861, the evidence suggests that the direction he helped set for the Royal Library was nevertheless largely maintained by Woodward and his successors up to the end of the nineteenth century and beyond.

Prince Albert's involvement and the timing of the reforms made to the Library raises a number of interesting questions regarding their context. What, for instance, were the models that the Prince and Woodward chose to follow in their arrangement of the collection? How do these relate to changing ideas about the organisation and ordering of similar types of library in the middle decades of the nineteenth century? After all, this period saw the introduction of new methods of organising and classifying knowledge and, as Wright (2007) has noted, the origin of many of the great 'modern' library classification schemes such as the Dewey Decimal System, which was first published in 1876. Last but not least, what do these changes reveal about the shifting significance of the Royal Library to the monarchy and about Albert's vision for the collection in general?

## **1.2 Aims and Objectives**

The overall aim of this study is to arrive at a more detailed understanding of the rationale behind the reforms to the organisation and arrangement of the Royal Library introduced in the middle decades of the nineteenth century by Prince Albert and Bernard Bolingbroke Woodward, to identify potential influences for these changes, and to determine their significance in light of mainstream developments in the history of library organisation and management in the period.

As such, the primary research objectives for the project can be summarised as follows:

1. To identify the background to, and nature of, the reforms made to the organisation of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle under the direction of Prince Albert, and to assess them in terms of their potential influences and models;
2. To evaluate the significance of these reforms within the broader historical context of the history of libraries in the nineteenth century, in order to determine how far the changes made to the Royal Library can be seen as reflective of contemporary trends and ideas regarding the arrangement of a library;
3. To analyse what the changes made to the Royal Library in the period suggest about Prince Albert's vision for the collection and its changing function and importance

to the monarchy, above all in the burgeoning ‘information age’ of the 1850s and 1860s.

By seeking to place the reforms of the Royal Library within their historical context in this way, such an analysis, it is hoped, will likewise contribute to the ongoing scholarly discussions regarding the history of private and aristocratic libraries in the nineteenth century, an area of inquiry which, as Potten (2015) points out, still remains to a great extent under-researched.

### **1.3 Methodology**

The research for this project was carried out through an historical study of the topic by means of an extended review of the literature. This was coupled with close analysis of the major primary sources regarding the redevelopment of the Royal Library under Prince Albert, details of which are laid out in the next section giving the results of the preliminary literature review.

The historical method was chosen as the one most naturally suited to answering the research questions outlined above due to the historical nature of the topic itself. One of the principal aims of historical study might be said to involve piecing together a narrative concerning events in the past from the basis of the evidence available to the researcher, while at the same time attempting to make informed judgements regarding the wider meaning and impact of these events. This procedure requires the retrieval, evaluation, and analysis of different kinds of document to provide evidence about the past, rather than, as with other forms of research in library and information studies, the collection and interpretation of large quantities of quantitative data (Pickard 2013).

As with all forms of qualitative analysis, a certain amount of subjectivity is unavoidable, however. As Tosh (2002) memorably describes the dilemma faced by the historian:

“The essence of historical enquiry is selection – of ‘relevant’ sources, of ‘historical’ facts and of ‘significant’ interpretations. At every stage both the direction and the destination of the enquiry are determined as much by the enquirer as by the data ... In this sense, historical knowledge is not, and cannot be, ‘objective’ (that is, empirically derived in its entirety from the object of the enquiry).”  
(Tosh 2002, 178)

This is, to a very great extent, understandable. Given that the sources that provide the historical researcher with their information must be carefully analysed so as to determine their relevance and trustworthiness, with the main instrument of that analysis being the person of the researcher themselves, it is to be expected that the resulting narrative is limited in so far as it reflects the levels of emphasis and importance which the individual historian decides to place on the evidence before them.

For a number of years now, historians of libraries have been asking questions about exactly what kind of history they are, as a discipline, attempting to write. Several scholars, beginning with Alistair Black in the 1990s, have militated against what they see as the trap of the narrow, institutional-bound perspective into which much academic work on the historical development of individual library collections and services has a tendency to fall. Rather than drawing upon insights from “mainstream history”, according to Black, “library history remains dominated by a traditional narrative of teleological, Whiggish progress, emphasising institutional, technical, professional and collections development” (Black 1997, 101). In a similar vein, Kristian Jensen, in a recent article in which he seeks to challenge the methodological assumption that diverse instances of libraries throughout history can be analysed and thought of as being always alike, likewise takes issue with the “institutionally motivated” writing of library history:

“The power of contemporary institutional life is strong and makes it far too easy to take a view of history as progression towards the modernity represented by the institution today. Under the guise of describing progress this is a deeply reactionary approach; it makes it hard to see past institutions as part of their own environment, in assuming the naturalness of modern man as the end result of the endeavours of medieval scribes.” (Jensen 2016, 123)

Jensen is here referring in particular to a certain “genre” of library history writing, namely “volumes on the history of an institution to celebrate jubilees, anniversaries, new buildings, new leaders, etc.”; yet his criticisms carry weight, in so far as they offer a salutatory degree of caution against giving too much emphasis to past developments as always and inevitably leading to the current, given state of that institution as we experience it in the present. To do so, Jensen suggests, is to remove the object of our study—in this case, a library collection with its own rationale and significance in the eyes of its creators—from out of its proper



context, thereby losing something in our understanding of it as a phenomenon that is “part of [its own] times, not a pale prefiguration of our own” (ibid., 123).

Taking on board the methodological considerations raised by Black and Jensen, among others,<sup>2</sup> this project was inspired by a desire to build upon the existing body of work on the history of the Royal Library and the reforms introduced by Prince Albert and Bernard Woodward in the 1860s, whilst at the same time looking beyond the perspective of the modern institution. The resulting study is structured in two parts. The first section describes the changes made to the organisation of the Royal Library under the direction of Prince Albert and attempts to identify their potential influences and model by an analysis of the literature; the second examines the contemporary significance of those changes in context, while seeking to understand exactly what kind of library the Prince Consort was attempting to create.

## 2. Preliminary Literature Review

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Prior to conducting the main literature review, a preliminary study of the available sources and secondary literature on the topics of royal libraries and nineteenth-century library history was carried out. The main object of this exercise was to identify the major trends and debates and, moreover, to provide a series of starting points for further research. What follows is, therefore, a necessarily more cursory summary of the literature than is included in the main part of the study.

### 2.1 Royal Libraries

There is a relatively substantial body of research on the history and significance of the book collections belonging to the Kings and Queens of England and of Great Britain (as the kingdom came to be known following the Treaty of Union in 1707). Much of this work has tended to focus on the period between the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. It was during this time, of course, that the Old Royal Library, which dates back to the 1470s and the reign of King Edward IV (1442-83, reigned 1461-70 and 1471-83), and subsequently the King's Library belonging to King George III, were actively being acquired and used by their royal

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<sup>2</sup> For similarly cogent criticism of the prevailing trends in library history writing, see the recent contributions by Aspray (2011), Augst (2015), and Mittler (2016).

patrons.<sup>3</sup> The fact that both of these collections eventually became part of the British Museum (in 1757 and 1824 respectively) goes part of the way towards explaining the attention given to them by library historians. Studies of the historical development and contents of these libraries have very often been closely connected with what might reasonably be termed the institutional ‘pre-history’ of the Library of the British Museum (and thus also of the British Library as its natural successor). Certainly, the last decades of the twentieth century witnessed a surge in interest in studies of the former royal collections and their foundational role in the creation of the national repository, as can be seen in the contributions by Miller (1973), Birrell (1987), Humphreys (1988), and Harris (1998, 2006, 2009).<sup>4</sup> The opening of the British Library in 1998, with the very visible architectural use made of the King’s Library—which now occupies a six-storey bronze and glass tower in the central part of the building—can easily be interpreted one important factor contributing to the scholarly interest shown in these collections.

Book historians working on the early modern and Enlightenment periods have also typically found rich ground for exploration in the form of the libraries belonging to kings and princes. The library collections of King Henry VIII (1491-1547, reigned 1509-47), much of the contents of which was acquired from monastic libraries following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s, have been meticulously described and analysed by J. P. Carley over several years (Carley 1992, 1999, 2015). Similarly, studies of the King’s Library, most notably those by Brooke (1977), Jefcoate (2003) and Lacey (2005), have been instrumental in highlighting the significance of King George III’s collecting activities within the wider cultural contexts of the Enlightenment, including the enthusiasm for creating a “universal library” along the lines proposed by Gabriel Naudé in his *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque* (Paris, 1627), and for acquiring and ordering knowledge about the world. Others have drawn attention to the library’s connections to the dynamic shifts in taste and behaviour that occurred at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, and which became known as “bibliomania”. Hunt (2006), for instance, have characterised King George III as the “first and foremost” among the collectors of this period, whose drive to create for himself a magnificent royal library made book collecting into a fashionable pursuit for the cultured aristocracy of the day. In addition to this, a number of interesting studies have also appeared in the last decades which deal with book collecting by queens in the period, above all with in connection with the

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<sup>3</sup> On the history of the Old Royal Library see also Stratford (1999), Backhouse (1999) and Carley (1999).

<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the publications by Birrell and Humphreys both represent the first and second instalments respectively of the Pannizzi Lectures, a series of talks instituted in 1985 to promote the collections of the British Library, which had come into being as a result of the British Library Act 1972.

impressive library formed by Queen Caroline of Ansbach (1683-1737), the German consort of King George II (Orr 2004; Jay 2006, 2014).

By contrast, there have been far fewer analyses of the significance of book collections and libraries to British royals in the nineteenth century, and practically none on their importance to the monarchy during the reign of Queen Victoria (with the one exception of Wright 2010). This silence is more than a little surprising, particularly given the enormous transformations which occurred during the period. The nineteenth century, after all, witnessed great changes in the availability and affordability of books and information, expanding library provision, and seismic shifts in the social and cultural economics of reading, all of which have been described by historians of the book and of libraries (see, for instance, Battles 2004; and Lerner 2001). Although the reasons for this apparent neglect are beyond the scope of this current project, the question is one which would, no doubt, reward further study.

Historical accounts of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle and its development, including descriptions of the reforms carried out under the direction of Prince Albert, have been more numerous, the majority of them being written by current or former employees of the Royal Collection Trust.<sup>5</sup> These consist of short surveys by Everett (1992, 2002) and a more detailed description by Patterson (1996), which reproduces the text of a lecture given in 1993. Indeed, Oliver Everett, in his capacity as Librarian at Windsor, also contributed a preface to Birrell's Pannizzi lecture on royal book collecting in 1986 (Birrell 1987). More recently, overviews of the work carried out by Prince Albert have also appeared in chapters by Wright and Owens (2007) and by Wright (2010), the latter as part of the catalogue of an exhibition on the topic of Victoria and Albert's collecting habits (including their books) held at the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace in 2010. The focus of these accounts is primarily upon the institutional progression of the Royal Library at Windsor towards its current form and the part played by Prince Albert in helping to shape this. Although each of these authors provides a considerable amount of detail regarding the changes introduced by Prince Albert, based for the most part on the evidence contained in Bernard Woodward's reports (for more on these, see below), they do comparatively very little to situate his work within the broader historical context of library history in the nineteenth century.

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<sup>5</sup> In the interests of full disclosure, the present author must admit also to falling into this category, having been employed as a member of staff in the Royal Library between September 2016 and January 2018. It was during this time that he was inspired to research Prince Albert's influences in the reorganisation of the collection more fully.

## 2.2 Nineteenth-century Libraries

In 1853 *The Times* announced to its readers that they were now living “in an age of information”.<sup>6</sup> A cursory glance at the admittedly enormous body of relevant literature on the subject of the history of libraries in the nineteenth century suggests that research in this area has tended to focus on the so-called “information revolution” (Fyfe 2009) which occurred in the period, and on the concomitant growth and development of institutions and technological innovations directed towards the provision of information to ever-increasing sectors of society. This can be seen, for instance, in studies of the rise of the state-sponsored public library in the second half of the nineteenth century following the passing of the Public Libraries Act 1850 (which, as Alistair Black has pointed out, nevertheless took over four decades to develop into a fully-functioning system (Black 2006)). The work of library historians such as Black (1996, 1997, 2001) has been particularly influential in this respect, and many of the essays in the final volume of *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland*, published in 2006, which covers the period 1850-2000 (and which Black in part edited) reflect this focus. Likewise, the years 1830-1900 have also been viewed by some as the period when the foundations were laid both of the modern “information society” (Weller and Bawden 2005) and of modern tools for the organisation and categorisation of knowledge, above all in the form of classification schemes and standardised cataloguing procedures (Wright 2008; Krajewski 2011).

As Edward Potten (2015) has recently noted, however, comparatively little attention has been paid to private libraries in the nineteenth century, above all those belonging to aristocratic collectors. Despite the fact that “there were more private libraries in the nineteenth century than in any earlier period”, he writes, “the landscape of the private library in the nineteenth century remains almost entirely uncharted” (Potten 2015, 73–74). Potten ascribes this state of affairs to dismissiveness on the part of some library historians regarding collections formed in the wake of bibliomania—the craze for collecting rare editions of books—the influence of which rumbled on throughout the rest of the century. In his analysis of the libraries found in country houses, Mark Purcell (2017) offers an alternative view, suggesting instead

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<sup>6</sup> *The Times*, 5 December 1853, p. 6, quoted by Weller (2010, 83)

that the apparent lack of interest shown in private libraries by book historians can be interpreted as ideological scepticism regarding the history of elites:

“In some circles [of book history], there was not only a reluctance to study the minutiae of aristocratic life, but the conviction it would not of necessity yield anything very meaningful or useful. Such things were better left to the ‘antiquarian empiricists’ denounced by [Lawrence] Stone in 1979.” (Purcell 2017, 17)

Whether or not Purcell’s diagnosis is accurate, the growing number of studies in recent decades on private book ownership by aristocratic patrons would seem to suggest that any such reservations on the validity of elite library-building as a subject for serious historical study no longer apply (see, for instance, Pearson 2006, 2012; Jefcoate 2016; Purcell 2016). Despite this, none of these studies makes any mention of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, arguably the most important and influential private library formed in the nineteenth century, intended as it was for the use and enjoyment of the sovereign, her family and household. This research project will attempt to go some way towards addressing what it sees as this gap in the literature.

## 2.3 Sources

In examining the history of the Royal Library at Windsor and its reorganisation in the middle of the nineteenth century, a number of sources can be drawn upon by the library historian. The most important are without doubt the detailed descriptions left of the work undertaken by the Librarian, Bernard Bolingbroke Woodward, who wrote four official reports on the Library and Print Room for Queen Victoria between October 1860 and October 1862.<sup>7</sup> These are now part of the Royal Library’s collection, but transcriptions of all four reports have been published in full by Everett (2002), along with the text of a memorandum written by Woodward concerning his time at the Library in April 1865.<sup>8</sup> These documents have formed much of the basis for later accounts, although a substantial amount of detail contained within them—including decisions taken by Woodward on the classification scheme, cataloguing procedures, and other aspects of library management—remains underexplored in the literature.

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<sup>7</sup> RCIN 1127884a-d

<sup>8</sup> RA VIC/Add J/1430

Other potential sources include the accounts of Privy Purse expenditure on the Royal Library for the period in the Royal Archives at Windsor, as well as correspondence and other documentation regarding the administration of the Library. A full examination of archival sources proved, regrettably, to be outside the scope of this project; in a similar way, time and accessibility constraints also precluded access to and use of Prince Albert's diaries and personal papers contained in the Royal Archives. Nevertheless, a convenient handlist of documents contained in the relating to Prince Albert in the Royal Archives has been published by Bosbach et al. (2015) as part of a series of volumes brought out by the Prince Albert Society to celebrate the joint cultural heritage and collections of the Houses of Windsor and Coburg (Prince Albert's ancestral seat in Germany). The second volume in this series, moreover, includes a discussion of the private libraries belonging to Queen Victorian and Prince Albert, together with transcriptions of the manuscript catalogues made of each library during the 1840s and 1850s (Bosbach, Davis, and Urbach 2018).

Queen Victoria's journals also provide a great deal of information on goings-on within the Royal Household during this period, as well as her impressions of people and places, including many of the private libraries belonging to the members of the aristocracy which she and Prince Albert visited throughout their life together. Selective use has been made of these, which survive in a number of transcripts and versions. All of these have been now digitised and made available online through a collaboration between the Royal Archives and the Bodleian Libraries in Oxford, and all references and extracts from the journals in what follows have been taken from the texts presented by this resource.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Analysis

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#### 3.1 Background: The Royal Library in 1860

In order to get an idea of the precise nature and context of the changes introduced by Prince Albert and Bernard Woodward to the Royal Library after 1860, it is necessary to first of all to consider in a little more detail what kind of library they encountered, some thirty years after it had been established.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org/home.do>

The creation of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle in 1832 was prompted, to a very great extent, by the loss to the Crown of the King's Library belonging to King George III. As has already been mentioned, this collection—comprising over 65,000 volumes—had been gifted to the British Museum nine years previously by its owner's son and heir, King George IV. The impetus for this gift has typically been ascribed to the King's desire to remodel the rooms formerly occupied by his father's books in Buckingham House (the residence purchased by King George III in 1761 as a family home), which he was in the process of converting into a royal palace (Harris 2009). Whether or not King George III had ever intended that his library should become the possession of the state in this manner has in recent years been brought into question. Lacey (2005), with the support of Harris (2009), points to the evidence of the King's two wills (in which he bequeaths his library to his son, George, and to all those who succeed him) to argue that he in fact meant for it to remain in royal hands. Nevertheless, as neither of these documents were found to be signed, they were declared invalid. As a result, the books from the King's Library were transferred from Buckingham House to Kensington Palace, and thence to the British Museum, where they arrived in August 1828 to be housed in the east wing gallery room designed and built for them by Sir Robert Smirke (1780-1867) (Miller 1973, 129; Harris 2009, 309).

Not all of the books found their way to the Museum, however. Before the transfer of his father's library was complete, King George IV had seen fit to retain some thirty-five volumes. These included at total of twenty-nine early printed books which had been presented to King George III in 1782 by the bibliophile scholar, Jacob Bryant (1715-1805), together with a number of other treasures, among them the Shakespeare Second Folio which had belonged to King Charles I (1600-49, reigned 1623-49)<sup>10</sup> and a copy of the Mainz *Psalter* (1457), the second ever book to be printed using movable type.<sup>11</sup> (For the full list of volumes retained by King George IV see the Appendix to Harris 2009). These books, along with the prints, drawings, and military maps collected by King George III, were to become the core around which the Royal Library at Windsor Castle would form in the following decade, and they remain there to this day.

The loss of the collection greatly angered King George IV's brothers, among them William, Duke of Clarence, the future King William IV. According to one story told by the nineteenth-century essayist and politician, Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59), William

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<sup>10</sup> RCIN 1080415

<sup>11</sup> RCIN 1071478

was so furious that he refused ever to set foot in the King's Library in the British Museum (Miller 1973, 126; Everett 2002). Upon his succession in 1830, he determined to establish an official royal book collection of his own. Faced with the prospect of being, in his own words, "the only monarch in Europe without a library" (as he is reported to have observed at the time to John Glover, his first librarian), the King commanded a suite of three rooms in the State Apartments at Windsor Castle to be remodelled for the purpose by the architect Sir Jeffrey Wyattville. The building works for the library were finished by September 1835, when the rooms were toured by King William's physician, Sir Henry Hallford, although the evidence suggests that no books had yet been added to the shelves (Patterson 1996).

The contents of the new library were drawn from several sources. As well as the books retained by King George IV from his father's collection at Buckingham House, there were the smaller libraries belonging to King George III at Windsor Castle, at Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park, and at Kew Palace (the latter having been transferred by his son to Brighton Pavilion in 1822). Likewise, the furniture and books from King George IV's library from Carlton House—demolished in 1826 in order to pay for renovations to Buckingham Palace—also found their way into the new collection at Windsor. Other acquisitions, it has been suggested, were made from the books, maps and papers of William, Duke of Cumberland (1721-65), which were still housed at Cumberland Lodge, and from the private library belonging to Queen Charlotte at Kew (Everett 2002). In a Codicil to his will in 1837, King William took the step of making the collection inalienable from the Crown, thereby making certain the safe continuance, as he no doubt saw it, of so many royal book collections amassed in his new library (Patterson 1996, 210).

The collection continued to grow in the years leading up to Queen Victoria's accession in 1837. "Although no bibliophile himself," writes Everett, "William IV clearly gave his Librarian, John Glover, the means to make important acquisitions" (Everett 2002, 59). As Patterson points out, the King's desire to create a library as magnificent as his father's can be seen in the purchase in 1835 of at least one-hundred volumes—including thirty incunabules, or books printed before 1501—made on behalf of the Royal Library at the sale of the books belonging to Dr Georg Kloss (1787-1854), a Frankfurt physician and bibliophile, and the acquisition of part of the library of Frederick North, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Guilford (1766-1828) later that same year (Patterson 1996, 209–10).

Writing in her journal some three months after her coronation, the nineteen-year-old Queen Victoria commented upon what she had heard regarding her uncle's interest in creating a library during a visit to Windsor Castle in September 1838:



Lord Melbourne told me when we were in the Library, that the late King spent every year £1000 towards making a Library, which he did, thinking his Father meant there to be one continued. Lord M. told me, that George III's Library, which George IV gave to the Museum, was the finest in Europe; I've now got 30,000 vols.<sup>12</sup>

Due to the fact that most of the papers relating to King William IV's reign were destroyed after his death, it is now no longer possible to corroborate this figure regarding expenditure on the Royal Library. Nevertheless, the rate of purchasing remained high under his successor. According to one set of accounts made later in Queen Victoria's reign, between 1837 and 1875, £28,116 was spent on books, prints and bookbinding; of this, a total £13,414-19s-1d was spent on the collection between 1846 and 1860. This represented an average sum of £957 per year over fourteen years (Patterson 1996, 211; Everett 2002, 59). As during the previous reign, many of these acquisitions were the result of large purchases from a number of sales of books belonging to various aristocratic collectors, including the Duke of Gloucester (1776-1834) and Charles Stuart, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Stuart de Rothesay (1779-1845), whose collection sold in 1841. Yet the increase in spending from 1846 has largely been attributed to "Prince Albert's increasing interest in the Library" and, particularly, its collection of prints and drawings (Everett 2002, 59; Wright and Owens 2007, 52). Even without recourse to the information contained in the Privy Purse bills relating to the period, what is clear is that the collection at Windsor had grown exceptionally quickly in a short space of time, reaching just under half the size of the King George III's library in just twenty-four years.

The man in charge of organising and managing this collection was John Glover, who had been appointed by King William IV in 1836. Glover had previously been an assistant to Sir Frederick Barnard (1742-1830), Librarian to King George III at Buckingham House, after having first apprenticed as a bookbinder. When Sir Frederick had received orders to withhold certain items from the King's Library before its transfer to the British Museum in 1828, it was Glover whom he sent in order to secure them (Miller 1973, 129). Despite having initially been given employment as Deputy Keeper in the Department of Printed Books at the British Museum along with several of his former colleagues from the King's Library, he subsequently left to take up the position of Librarian at Windsor, a job he was to remain in for the next twenty-four years (Harris 2009, 311).

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<sup>12</sup> RA VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 September 1838 (Lord Esher's transcripts).

While at the British Museum, Glover worked for a time alongside Antonio Panizzi (1797-1879) in helping to prepare the new general catalogue of the library. The first volume of this catalogue was not printed until 1841, long after Glover had left (Harris 2006; Miller 1988). Nonetheless, it is tempting to speculate about what effect the experience of working in the Museum at that time had on Glover, particularly when it came to the issue of his competency as a librarian (a quality that would be brought into question in the years following 1860). Panizzi's *Rules for the compilation of the catalogue of the printed books in the British Museum*—his famous “91 Rules” according to which the entries for general catalogue of the British Museum were to be prepared—did not appear until 1839. Yet they had their origin in the period during which Glover and Panizzi were members of the same department (Miller 1988).

Indeed, one of Glover's first acts upon his appointment as Librarian at Windsor was, it would seem, to begin compiling a catalogue of the collection. The evidence for this comes from a single-volume manuscript catalogue written in Glover's hand, which survives in the Royal Library. Entitled *An Alphabetical Catalogue of the Royal Library Founded by His Majesty King William IV. A.D. MCCCXXV*, and supplied with a printed title page, this volume was clearly intended to be the first in a series of finding aids to the entire collection; in the end it was the only one completed, covering the letters A-C.<sup>13</sup> The entries in the catalogue are arranged alphabetically by the name of the author or by a keyword present in the title; and the format of the book in question is also given for each entry. In some instances, several additional lines are left blank under a particular heading (such as that for “Cyclopaedia”) which the compiler knows the Library is likely to acquire more titles associated with in the future. In fact, everything about the catalogue would suggest that its method of compilation was almost entirely consistent with that of a general catalogue as it was practiced at the time, including in the British Museum (Brunt 2006; Krajewski 2011).

Quite why Glover appears never to have finished work on the catalogue remains a mystery, although it may have something to do with the transition to a new monarch after 1837 and the continued rapid growth of the collections. As Patterson has noted (1996, 211), the lack of surviving administrative records for this period means that the history of the library remains more obscure than we would like it be. What is clear is that by the time of Woodward's *First Report* in October 1860 there was still no complete catalogue of the Royal Library, although it

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<sup>13</sup> RCIN 1028964. This volume has recently been digitised and made freely available as part of Georgian Papers Online, a digital project hosted by the Royal Archives, <http://gpp.rct.uk>. Retrieved November 2018.

would seem from the evidence provided in this document that Glover had in fact by this point begun transcribing the titles of works in the library onto paper slips, managing to catalogue around half the collection in this way before his death in May 1860 (Everett 2002, 65).

Due to the patchy nature of the sources, we can also tell very little about how the books were organised prior to 1860, save that they seem to have been arranged by size, with folio volumes on the bottom shelves running through to smaller books (octavos and duodecimos) at the top: “without any regard for their contents, in strict accordance to the established principles of proportion, uniformity, and outward beauty”, as one visitor to the Royal Library in this period later put it, in an article published *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1862.<sup>14</sup> By the 1860s, then, it would appear that the idea of organising a collection of books by format alone and not by any sort of subject-based arrangement or classificatory system was considered unfashionable, laughable even, and certainly something no serious librarian would countenance. “Those who find pleasure in an occasional lounge in the shops of booksellers,” writes the library historian, Edward Edwards, in his *Memoirs of Libraries* (1859):

“... will sometimes have heard amusing stories of customers who are more anxious about the appearance than critical of the contents of their purchases. ‘Big books on the lower, and little books on the upper shelves, but let them be nicely bound’ [...]” (Edwards 1859, i, 29)

The implication is that Glover's organisation of the collection had been more concerned with its decorous appearance than with its literary and intellectual contents. The judgement seems a little unfair, especially when one considers the fact that such an arrangement, with books of different format placed on different shelves, had been widely used in libraries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Jackson 1974, 258). That being said, the goal of the author of the *Macmillan's Magazine* article is manifestly to celebrate the reforms to the administration of the Royal Library achieved by the new librarian, Bernard Woodward, and his (now dead) master, the Prince Consort. If one takes into account the unabated flow of volumes into the library in the twenty years which lead up to the change of administration, one might suggest that the arrangement employed by Glover could just as easily have been a stop-gap

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<sup>14</sup> *Macmillan's Magazine*, October 1862, 484.

measure, intended to store books in as tidy a manner as possible, until such time as he could finish work on the catalogue.

### 3.2 The Nature and Context of Prince Albert and Woodward's Reforms

Glover died in May 1860, following a long illness. His passing was mourned, genuinely it would seem, by both the Queen and Prince Albert. "A great loss," wrote Queen Victoria in her journal entry for 23 May 1860. "He was most kind, devoted, thoroughly trustworthy, painstaking, and very loyal in his devotion."<sup>15</sup>

At the time of his death, Glover had been running the library almost single-handedly for over twenty years. During this time he had also been instrumental in aiding Prince Albert to sort through and put into order the large collection of prints and drawings, many of them belonging to King George III, which had come to Windsor along with the books in the 1830s. In order to arrange this collection in a suitable manner, Prince Albert had begun work on organising the prints into groups as early as January 1843 (Wright and Owens 2007, 56). His method in this was to sort them according to a systematic classification, with prints "arranged according to artist, engraver of school, or under subject, such as portraits, topography or history" (ibid., 56), following which the prints were conserved and mounted. This was frequently an activity which the Prince Consort would undertake together with the Queen, who noted their visits in her Journal: "We went to the Print Room where we arranged Landseer's prints in Albert's album", noted Queen Victoria on Christmas Day, 1851.<sup>16</sup>

A keen student of art history since his youth, Prince Albert's interest in the print collections at Windsor would have been sparked by his familiarity with the impressive collection of around 124,000 prints which formed the core of the Herzogliche Bibliothek, the private ducal library in his native Coburg. These were accompanied by around 60,000 volumes, with a focus on the literature of the Enlightenment, together with another 15,000 volumes housed in the Bibliotheca Casimiriana, named after the sixteenth-century Duke of Saxe-Coburg Johann Casimir (1564-1633), who had established the collection (Weschenfelder 2007). Prince Albert's work on the Windsor prints, and his subsequent initiation (from 1853) of a much more ambitious endeavour—that of gathering together a complete collection of images of all known

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<sup>15</sup> RA VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 23 May 1860 (Princess Beatrice's copies).

<sup>16</sup> RA VIC/MAIN/QVJ 25 December 1951, quoted in Wright and Owens 2007, 56.

works by the Renaissance painter, Raphael (1483-1520)—evolved into a project aimed at setting up a fully-equipped Print Room for the storage and use of the Royal Library's art treasures. Taking up three rooms on the floor beneath the library, the Print Room was fully completed by 1860 (Wright and Owens 2007), just in time for the change in administration.

The work on the Print Room provides a useful backdrop against which to set the program of reforms carried out in the Royal Library, and their timing. "We can only assume that Glover's age and venerability had stopped the Prince from acting earlier," suggests Patterson, "but that with a new librarian he was able to extend his interests to the library" (Patterson 1996, 212). Wright and Owens (2007), however, imply in their analysis that Prince Albert's enthusiasm for the print collections which predominated in the years leading up to 1860: "[a]lthough frequent visits were paid to the library at this time ... Prince Albert appears to have directed Glover's organisational energies to the collection of prints ..., rather than to books" (Wright and Owens 2007, 52). Given the Prince Consort's well-documented interest in the arts and historical reputation as an "art historian *manqué*", in the words of one of his biographers (Hobhouse 1983, 75), it seems only natural for him to have concentrated his activities during this period to building up the royal print collection, which he hoped would eventually become a useful resource for students and scholars.

Nevertheless, in the summer of 1860 he was presented with the opportunity of contributing to the new direction of the library. In July, Bernard Bolingbroke Woodward was appointed as the Royal Librarian. Unlike Glover, Woodward had little in the way of experience as the manager of a library. Nevertheless, he fitted well into the category occupied by other contemporary librarians of private libraries in the nineteenth century, many of whom were clergymen or established scholars in their own right (Purcell 2017, 180–85). Woodward was a little of both, having previously trained as a Congregationalist pastor and published a number of historical, linguistic and antiquarian works, becoming a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1857.<sup>17</sup> What is more, he had connections with the London Library, the institution set up in a house in St James's Square in 1841 by the writer Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) as an independent subscription library to rival the British Museum. It is intriguing to note that Prince Albert had been Royal Patron of the London Library since its foundation; indeed, Woodward was recommended to the Prince Consort by William Bodham Donne (1807-1882), who had served as the London Library's second Librarian until 1857. Woodward had even managed to

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<sup>17</sup> For Woodward's biography see his entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29942>

beat the current Librarian, Robert Harrison (who later went to become one of the founders of the Library Association in 1877) to the job.<sup>18</sup> Given his contacts and his scholarly reputation, therefore, Woodward must have seemed to the Prince the ideal candidate to take on the challenge of developing the library at Windsor.

Following his appointment, Woodward set to work assessing the condition of the library and its collections, presenting his *First Report on the Royal Library* (RCIN 1127884a) to the Prince Consort and the Queen in the following October. This was to be first in a series of three reports written by Woodward on the redevelopment of the Library, the other two of which appeared in October 1861 and October 1862 respectively (RCIN 1127884b, RCIN 1127884c; see Everett 2002). In April 1861, Woodward also produced an *Additional Report on the Collections of Prints and Drawings*, which gives details of his work on the Print Room, above all his plans to catalogue and arrange the engravings and Old Master drawings belonging to the collection (RCIN 1127884d). Given the focus of this study on the changes made to the library under Woodward's supervision, it is to the evidence provided by the first three of the above-mentioned reports that we must now turn.

The impression given of the state of the Royal Library in Woodward's *First Report* of 1860 has been described as one of "great confusion" (Patterson 1996, 212). When he assessed the collection, Woodward found that the 38,931 volumes which made up the library not only had no real catalogue of which to speak, but also that space on the shelves was running perilously low. "The great need for increased Shelfroom is another obvious subject of remark," he remarks towards the beginning of his report, adding that:

"... [n]ot only are several of the tables covered with volumes, to which no place on the shelves has been assigned; but in many of the presses, the shelves are so close to each other, and the books are wedged in so firmly, that it is very difficult to remove any without injuring the binding of them [...]" (Everett 2002, 63)

By way of remedy to this problem of space—a perennial one in almost all libraries, above all in the nineteenth century—Woodward suggested drastic alterations to the height of the ceiling in one of the library rooms, with the construction of a gallery around the upper part so as to double the number of bays of shelves, and the raising of the bookcases in another room

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

by approximately a metre. In total, it has been estimated that the building works initiated by Woodward at this time provided space for around 10,000 more books by the time they were completed in 1865 (Wright and Owens 2007, 53). Woodward also recommended the identification and disposal of any duplicates, including any incomplete multi-volume works, and the transfer of the collections of archival papers belonging to the Duke of Cumberland and the those of the deposed Stuart monarchs (whose papers had been acquired by the Prince Regent in 1807) to lockable storage in another part of the the building. In addition to this, Woodward proposed that a bookplate be designed and inserted into every volume, “[for] the means of identifying any book belonging to the Library”, and to assist in making sure that books removed from the library for sale as duplicates had been done so legitimately (Everett 2002, 62).

Along with questions of space and security, some of the more fundamental changes made to the Royal Library during Woodward’s tenure were to the organisation of the collection itself. For one thing, the provision of a catalogue was a priority: “One of the absolutely indispensable requisites of a Library of any extent is a Catalogue,” Woodward opines in his *First Report* (Everett 2002, 65). Although preparations for compiling one had been undertaken by his predecessor, Glover, who had by that time transcribed entries for around half of the works in the library onto paper slips, Woodward arranged for these to be checked, revised or re-written and standardised: “bringing them all into such a uniformity of plan, &c. as is necessary for a good, working Catalogue” (ibid.). The catalogue itself was to be produced using the very latest in technological advances and several formats supplied in order to aid retrieval and inventory control:

“[A]s it is in the present condition of the Library, premature to speak of printing the Catalogue, I propose to have these revised slips transcribed by the polygraphic process used in the British Museum ... so as to furnish the Library with one Alphabetical, and one Classified Catalogue, and a third with the titles arranged in the order of the presses. A fourth copy of the Catalogue should I think be placed in Buckingham Palace.” (Everett 2002, 66).

In addition, Woodward suggests replacing the current system of classmarks used in the library with “the less complex system of press marks”, involving consecutively numbered bays of shelves, with each shelf allocated a different letter of the alphabet. This system, Woodward

goes on, is the one “which the experience of the British Museum, the Athenaeum, and other Libraries, has shewn to be the best” (Everett 2002, 66). As with the catalogue, the reforms suggested by Woodward involve bringing the organisation of the Royal Library into line with established practice in other institutions, above all those belonging to the elite London-based cultural scene, represented in this case by the British Museum and the library of the Athenaeum Club on Pall Mall.

One other area in which Woodward’s suggestions seek to bring the library into line with the organisational procedures found in other institutions of the period is the introduction of a classification system ordered by subject. The idea of shelving a collection of books arranged into different subject areas has a long history, as discussed in the literature on the history of classification (Jackson 1974). By the 1860s, however, systems of shelf-classification by subject had become the norm and was represented in many of the libraries of academic and learned institutions, including the British Museum and the Royal Institution in London, (founded in 1799), as well as in the new public libraries such as that at Manchester (Brunt 2006). The year before work began on the Royal Library, the radical library reformer and historian, Edward Edwards, who had been librarian of the Manchester Free Public Library up to 1858, published a *Handbook of Library Economy* as part of the second volume of his book, *Memoirs of Libraries* (Edwards 1859). In it, Edwards surveys the entire range of classification systems used from the fifteenth century to the present day, even going so far as to suggest one of his own invention for use in public libraries; following this, Edwards provides a discussion of the practicalities of shelf-arrangement and discusses the arrangements of the presses shelves in a number of institutional libraries, including that of the Royal Institution and his own Manchester Free Public Library (ibid., ii, 894-906). Edwards’s work was highly influential in its day, and has been credited by Black (1997, 102) as “[setting] in motion the discourse of professional librarianship” which helped contribute to the foundation of the Library Association in 1877. Whether or not Woodward had in fact read Edwards’s book, about which we have no evidence, the work is certainly reflective of a wider contemporary discourse concerning the appropriate way to organise a library in the middle of the nineteenth century. Given the selection of classificatory schemes on offer, therefore, which did Woodward decide to choose?

The answer to this question raises the issue, hitherto little discussed, of the Prince Consort’s involvement in the work being done on the library. In his *First Report* of 1860, Woodward states that he intends to adopt the classification scheme of “Schleiermacher, with such slight changes as may be needful to adopt it to this Library” (Everett 2002, 66). The system



referred to here by Woodward is the classification outlined by the German librarian Andreas Schleiermacher (1787-1858), who published his *Bibliographisches System der gesamten Wissenschaftskunde* (Bibliographical Classification for short) in 1847, with a second edition appearing in 1852 (Schleiermacher 1847, 1852; see also Patterson 1996, 212). Originally created for the court library of Darmstadt, of which Schleiermacher was the chief librarian, the system contains fourteen topics split into twenty-five main classes, which are sub-divided still further into a total of over 12,500 classes, together with an index of approximately 27,000 terms. This makes it “one of the most detailed and comprehensive library classifications published in the nineteenth century”, according to one assessment (Stevenson 1978). The scheme receives short shrift from Edwards, who includes it in his survey of classificatory systems in the *Handbook* of 1859, commenting wryly that “[t]he elaboration with which this plan is carried out into the utmost minuteness of subdivision is marvellous, but this, I fear, is its chief merit” (Edwards 1859, ii, 808). However, Schleiermacher’s system was moderately influential on the German library scene of the nineteenth century, remaining in use at the Ducal Library in Darmstadt (now the Hessische Lands- und Hochschulbibliothek) until the 1930s, as well as finding favour in academic libraries at Giessen and Frankfurt (Stevenson 1978, 18, n. 6). The decision to introduce such a scheme into the Royal Library in Windsor Castle seems, in this respect, more attributable to the influence of the German Prince Consort than it does to an English scholar and librarian like Woodward.

From the beginning of the work on the library, Prince Albert appears to have guided Woodward enthusiastically in the realisation of his program of reforms. In his *Third Report on the Royal Library*, which he presented to the Queen in October 1862, some ten months after the Prince’s death, Woodward refers to “the energetic interest taken by his illustrious Master in his task of rescuing from uselessness, and restoring to order and service, the literary and artistic treasures of the Royal Library” (Everett 2002, 85). He also adds that he “thoroughly discussed in his frequent conferences with the Prince concerning” all the various aspects of the library’s management: “[and] thus, in prosecuting his work, he is continually cheered by the reflection, that he is carrying out the precisely expressed wishes & designs of his Master.” (Everett 2002, 85–86). Three years later, in a memorandum written in 1865, Woodward appeared even more trenchant regarding his role in the redevelopment of the collection, stating that:

When I was appointed to the charge of the Royal Library I found that I had not in fact to take charge of a Library, & perform the

ordinary & easily understood duties of a Librarian, but out of an assemblage of about 40,000 volumes, unarranged except by sizes, & uncatalogued ... *I had to make a Library.* (Everett 2002, 87)

This undertaking, Woodward goes on to explain, was at the express behest of the Prince Consort, who was “exceedingly desirous of seeing the Library made” (ibid., 87). The evidence provided by many of the decisions reported in Woodward’s communications in the years between 1860 and 1862 would seem to support the conclusion that Prince Albert was the main driving force behind the redevelopment of the library.

Creating more space for the collection, working towards the compilation of a useful and useable catalogue, and introducing a systematic classification scheme as an aid to the location and retrieval of volumes by subject are all aspects which can be seen as part of the Prince Consort’s plans for the Royal Library and how it was to be managed. Another is the broader vision for the library and its subsequent development expressed in Woodward’s reports.

Whilst the library had seen a large number of acquisitions in the years leading up to 1860, Woodward, upon getting to grips with the library, reported that was “unable to discern traces of any plan hitherto followed, which is special to the collection as a Royal Library for England” (Everett 2002, 68). In his list of the various subject areas in which the collection was lacking, therefore, Woodward takes the opportunity to come up with just such a plan. According to Woodward, the library “should consist of a complete Diplomatic and Historical Library, and a complete, but select General Library, combined” (Everett 2002, 68). It should contain a selection of the best editions of literary texts in all languages—although “not necessarily the rarest, or most curious”—as well as a collection of general textbooks in every branch of science “from Theology to Mathematics and Medicine” which are detailed enough to suit the needs of the average educated gentleman, albeit not the professional or the scholar.

This amounted, in effect, to a more or less coherent acquisitions policy for the library, in all but name. In Woodward’s estimation, the largest and most complete sections should be those relating to history, also comprising “Geography, Travels, Topography, Ethnology, Genealogy, Statistics, Records, Diplomatics, and Treaties”. Indeed, the report goes on to say that “Whatever the Statesman, or the Diplomatist could possibly require, should be found here” (ibid., 68). Finally, in a gesture towards the increasing importance of the Britain’s imperial conquests in the nineteenth century, Woodward also recommends that the collection should also try to encompass as much material as “can illustrate the extent, condition, progress, &

prospects of the British Empire” (ibid.), along with an extensive selection of the best and most accurate maps, showing every part of the world, including those which show major modern transport routes such as railways and canals. In short, one might argue, the report reimagines the library as a complete resource for the modern sovereign, one whose task it is to rule over an increasingly industrial, interconnected, and information-driven nation.

### 3.3 Postscript: Later Developments

The reforms to the Royal Library at Windsor continued, for the most part, along the lines which had been laid out for them in the reports written by Woodward (no doubt following his many “conferences” with Prince Albert on the subject). The building works carried on to raise the height of the bookcases and provide more shelf space, and by October 1862 Woodward was able to report to the Queen that a “rough approximation to a systematic Arrangement of the Library” had been completed. This had involved gathering together all the books belonging to the classes of literature, theology and the sciences into one room, with those on the subjects of history, geography and diplomacy in another; the third was reserved for the remainder of the classes (including heraldry, architecture, antiquities and technology), although the volumes in question were still being stored elsewhere, since the renovations in this room had been delayed (Everett 2002, 83–84). Indeed, it was not until 1875 that Richard Holmes (1835-1911), Woodward’s successor as librarian, was able to report that the system of pressmarks had finally been introduced and that the library was now in “fairly working order” (Patterson 1996, 214). Apart from some minor adjustments over the years, the organisation of the library has remained practically the same up to the present day: “Such was [the Prince Consort’s] achievement that no fundamental changes to the arrangement of the library have proved necessary in the last 140 years” (Wright and Owens 2007, 54).

The work on cataloguing the collection had also been finished by the autumn of 1862, although none of the printed catalogues envisaged in Woodward’s *First Report* was ever produced. Instead, the paper slip-catalogue begun in the 1860s persisted until the beginning of the twentieth century, when the entries were typed out onto cards. These were to remain the only finding aid to the collection until the advent of a computerised cataloguing system in the 1990s (Wright and Owens 2007, 53).

Following the untimely death of the Prince Consort in December 1861, Woodward carried on as librarian in Windsor for the next eight years. Much about his later years in the

role suggest that his management of the library declined without the energetic guidance of Prince Albert, and he was involved in a disagreement with Sir Charles Phipps (1801-66), Queen Victoria's Private Secretary, regarding the issue of how library funds had been used (Everett 2002, 61). His health failed him and he died in post in 1869 at the age of fifty-three, without ever seeing the completion of the redevelopments to the library he had so fundamentally helped to shape.

## 4 Discussion

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What were the main models which the Prince Consort and Woodward had in mind when they began to develop their ideas for reforming the Royal Library, and what influences led them to make the decisions they chose?

The field available for comparison, it must be admitted, is a particularly large one. The nineteenth century was, after all, a time when "collections, public and private, of books, newspapers and other printed items underwent an unprecedented expansion and diversification" (Black 1997, 108). Studies of library provision in the years leading up to 1850, such as that by Manley (2006), have highlighted the huge variety of different types of libraries that emerged during this period, ranging from libraries aimed at serving the needs of literary, philosophical and scientific societies such as the Royal Institution (established in 1799) to libraries associated with mechanics' institutes, London clubs, prisons, workhouses, and army barracks. The 1850s witnessed the establishment of circulating libraries at most of the major railways stations, courtesy of the expanding business interests of the booksellers W. H. Smith & Sons (Eliot 2006); meanwhile, the Manchester Free Public Library, the first to take advantage of the provisions made by the Public Libraries Act 1850 allowing the opening of rate-supported public lending and reference libraries, opened its doors in 1852, to the acclaim of none other than Charles Dickens (Sutherland 2015). Contemporary publications such as Edwards's *Memoirs of Libraries* (1859) gave expression to the growing interest in, and awareness of, the place and importance of libraries in society by charting their development throughout space and time, as well as reflecting at the same time the diversity of the library landscape as it then existed and inviting comparisons among their readers regarding the best way in which to administer and manage collections of books and other items. Furthermore, the

ever-increasing awareness of the growing amount of information with which society had to cope, it has been suggested, greatly contributed to the rise of new and more detailed theories regarding bibliographical classification and cataloguing rules (Weller and Bawden 2005; A. Wright 2008).

Building upon the previous section's analysis of Woodward's plans for the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, it is possible to draw out some comparisons between the reforms proposed to the collection and the wider library landscape as it appeared in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, in order to test to what extent the changes instituted by Woodward and Prince Albert were influenced by particular models and benchmarks. Given that such a comparison can quickly fall victim to a lack of structure, the following will concentrate on several of the themes identified in the preceding analysis, particularly the connections made to other libraries, both institutional and private, and the system of classification chosen.

#### **4.1 Connections to other Libraries**

A number of contemporary benchmarks for the reforms made in the 1860s to the Royal Library appear upon reading through Woodward's plans. The most important of these is the British Museum Library, which by mid-century had already been established as one of the most preeminent libraries in London, and indeed the nation as a whole. From 1842 onwards, a revised Copyright Act had meant that legal deposit privileges which had been transferred to the British Museum along with the Old Royal Library in the eighteenth century were now greatly strengthened, a move assiduously campaigned for by Antonio Panizzi, then Keeper of Printed Books (Miller 1988; Harris 2006). The annual flow of publications into the library following this date, vastly increased by this legislation and by growing numbers of purchases of foreign material, resulted in a drive to create more space, a goal which was subsequently achieved by the construction of the new Reading Room to a design suggested by Panizzi and realised by Sir Robert Smirke.

As Wright (1997) has described, one of the figures to whom Panizzi turned in order to elicit support for his plans for the design of the Reading Room was Prince Albert. The Prince Consort, whose passionate interests in architecture and art had seen him serve on the Fine Arts Commission overseeing the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament in the early 1840s and, more recently, as chair of the Royal Commission in charge of the organisation of the Great Exhibition of 1851, was impressed by Panizzi and appears to have listened with great interest

to his ideas. In June 1855, the royal couple visited the Museum and were taken to survey the building works. When the new Reading Room opened in 1857, the Prince Consort agreed to the guest of honour, but was prevented from attending by the death of the Queen's aunt, Mary, Duchess of Gloucester (1776-1857), the last surviving child of King George III. Nevertheless, it is clear that Prince Albert thought highly of the British Museum and also of Panizzi, who in 1856 had been promoted to Principal Librarian (Miller 1988; Wright 1997).

The prominence of the British Museum Library as a point of comparison in Woodward's plans for the Royal Library at Windsor Castle is not to be underestimated, therefore. The provision of the library with a complete catalogue—one of Woodward's primary objectives in 1860—was to be achieved according to the latest methods employed in the British Museum (i.e., reproduced by “polygraphic process”, seemingly a technique for creating photostat facsimiles of handwritten paper slips); likewise, the system of shelfmarks proposed by Woodward, by which presses were numbered rather than lettered, had been in use in the British Museum since the 1830s, when it had been introduced into the King's Library (along with a subject-based shelf-classification) by Rev. Henry Baber, Panizzi's predecessor as Keeper of Printed Books (Hill 1991). As a scholar himself, Woodward would certainly have visited and used the British Museum Library and was no doubt familiar with its general catalogue, which had by 1859 grown to fill over a thousand volumes (Miller 1973, 266). A system replicating that achieved at the British Museum may therefore have seemed the obvious choice to organise such an important collection as the Royal Library.

The connections with the Museum are more personal, too. One notable feature of Woodward's *Second Report* on the library, which presented to Prince Albert and the Queen in October 1861, is the acknowledgements made in it to assistance he has received from external sources. Many of the names given by Woodward of those from whom he has sought advice have connections to the British Museum; included among are John Winter Jones (1805-81) and Thomas Watts (1811-69) (see Everett 2002, 80–81). Both men were protégés of Panizzi, and both went on to succeed him in the role of Keeper of Printed Books—Jones from 1856 onwards, and Watts in 1866 (Miller 1973; Harris 2006). In his position as Keeper, Jones was responsible for continuing the production of the general catalogue, following his predecessor's example by refusing to allow it to be printed until the whole of the manuscript was finished (Harris 1998). We cannot know for certain, but it is likely that Woodward turned to these two men for advice concerning the appropriate cataloguing procedures to be followed at the Royal Library, which presumably would have included the application of the rules devised by Panizzi in 1839. Either way, the British Museum Library certainly represented the apogee in terms of cultural

touchpoints informing how Woodward (and, one might expect, the Prince Consort) viewed the task of creating a suitably organised library.

There were other influences, too. Another of the names listed by Woodward in the acknowledgements section of his *Second Report* is that of William Bodham Donne, former librarian of the London Library and, by 1861, examiner of plays for the Lord Chamberlain's Office (Everett 2002, op. cit.). Donne had been influential in Woodward's being appointed librarian at Windsor the previous year and seems to have continued to provide a point of contact and reference for Woodward in his pursuit of his role. In a similar way, the institution that Donne had formerly managed—the London Library—along with other elite libraries in the capital, would have formed a natural touchstone by which any reforms carried out in Windsor could be measured, above all to the catalogue. Many of the libraries on the London scene had produced printed catalogues of their holdings from the 1840s onwards; these included volumes published by the Athenaeum Club (founded in 1824; first printed catalogue published in 1845, with a supplement appearing in 1850), the London Library itself (second edition of the catalogue published 1847-52), and the Royal Institution (a new classified catalogue was published in 1857) (Manley 2006). Indeed, Prince Albert's personal library in Buckingham Palace contained several such catalogues, including those of the London Library and the Royal Institution (Bosbach, Davis, and Urbach 2018). The production of published catalogues by such institutions was not simply a means of providing information on their contents; it must also have suggested to readers of such publications that one of the essential characteristic for any library which aspired to the name was that it should have, of essence, a well-ordered catalogue. Rather than simply a warehouse of books, a library should be “effectively organised and efficiently run”, a view with which the Victorian statesman William Gladstone (1809-98) would himself later concur (Scarre 2017).

The importance of well-ordered libraries which were designed for use, and not simply for show, was also close to the Prince Consort's heart. In the decade before work began on the redevelopment of the Royal Library, Prince Albert had been variously engaged in creating a number of libraries of his own. Together with his private library in Buckingham Palace, he incorporated comfortable private library spaces into his designs for Osborne House (1845) and Balmoral Castle (1852-5). He and Queen Victoria also established a number of libraries for the use of staff on their estates, including the Servants' Libraries at Windsor and Balmoral (1859) (Wright 2010). In the same year, the Prince personally endowed a library for Army officers (The Prince Consort's Library) at the new training camp at Aldershot, stocking it with a collection of books on military science, history and biographies which he had been

systematically purchasing since 1857 (Vickers 1993); the library opened its doors on 5 October 1860, the same month that Woodward presented his *First Report* to the Prince. Libraries, it would seem, were very much on the Prince Consort's mind when the opportunity had arisen to appoint a new librarian at Windsor Castle and to bring the collection there finally under control.

## 4.2 Classification Scheme

One of the ways in which control was to be asserted over the collection which had been gathered together at Windsor Castle since the 1830s was with the application of a classification scheme. As discussed above, subject-based classification schemes at the shelf-level had become the expected norm long before 1860. Nevertheless, the 'crisis of control' experienced in the Victorian period in the wake of innovations in technology, communications, and transport links appears to have resulted, in at least one interpretation, in an revival of interest in systematic categorisation as a means of subdividing and classifying knowledge every more narrowly, and thereby more manageably (Weller and Bawden 2005). The examples of other libraries would also have recommended the subject-based classification to Woodward and Prince Albert, as might the writings of Edwards in his *Memoirs of Libraries* (1859). However, the particular choice of classification scheme appears to have been one instance where the Prince Consort's influence and vision for the library shone through most clearly.

As noted in section 3.2 of the analysis, the selected classification scheme was the Bibliographical Classification by Andreas Schleiermacher, best known in its second edition of 1852. Schleiermacher was firmly in the camp of those who favoured systematic classification, and his scheme followed closely in the footsteps of the 'faculty'-based systems common in German academic libraries in the second half of the eighteenth century, according to which the various classes follow the structure of the faculties or disciplines taught in the German university system (Garside 1950; Minter 2009). In Schleiermacher's scheme, as had previously been the case in the classification devised by Johann Michael Francke for the court library in Dresden in the 1760s, history was particularly given a high degree of prominence—a factor which may have recommended it to Prince Albert for the purposes of creating his "complete Diplomatic and Historical" library. The classification devised by Schleiermacher has also been interpreted as particularly 'modern', however, in that it was not explicitly based on any philosophical view of the status of the various branches of knowledge, unlike other schemes in the early years of the nineteenth century; moreover, many of its features bear close resemblance



to some of the innovations that would later appear in systems such as the Dewey Decimal Classification (1876) and Library of Congress (1897), such as tables of standard subdivisions and a synthetic notation for classmarks (Stevenson 1978). That such a system should have found its way into the attentions of Prince Albert is particularly interesting, above all given the Prince Consort's well-known interest in the latest scientific and intellectual advances.

So how did this scheme come to be used? From the evidence of a manuscript catalogue of Prince Albert's private library produced at some point before 1860 (RCIN 1028951), an edition of which has been published by Bosbach, Davis and Urhart (2018), we know that the Prince Consort owned a copy of the 1852 edition of Schleiermacher's Bibliographical Classification (F10). According to recent research undertaken by Oliver Walton (Urquhart Irvine and Walton 2018), it would appear that this classification scheme was in fact used in the Prince's private library in Buckingham Palace and, indeed, also in the library at Balmoral. A surviving subject-catalogue for the Balmoral Library (RCIN 1013131) shows the same order of classes as was used in Albert's private library, and maps these onto a similar scheme of colour-coding for each major section (literature, for instance, is *rosa* 'pink') (Urquhart Irvine and Walton 2018; Wright 2010); spine-labels attached to many of the surviving books from the Prince's library, which were incorporated into the Royal Library after 1898, show the use of the same colour-coding scheme (Wright 2010).

Fascinatingly, Walton also points out that person responsible for introducing this system of classification into the library was not by the Prince Consort himself, but rather Dr Ernst Becker, who served as the Prince's private librarian from 1851 to 1860 (Urquhart Irvine and Walton 2018). Becker wrote to his mother soon after starting work in the library to say that he had begun compiling a new catalogue and, on his own initiative, was preparing to arrange it according to the Schleiermacher system. "I have done this work of my own free will and not told the Prince anything about it," he maintains in the letter. "When it is complete I will surprise him with it." (Becker 2015; quoted in Urquhart Irvine and Walton 2018). A native of Darmstadt, Becker was able to correspond with the then librarian of the court library, Philipp Walther, in order to ask for advice about where to place individual books within the system (Urquhart Irvine and Walton 2018, 182). By the end of June 1853, Becker was writing again to his mother to announce the news that he had finished the catalogue, although he was certain that the Prince would take some time to get used to the new ordering: "so far he cannot find any of the books he looks for without the use of the catalogue, and that is inconvenient" (Becker 2015, 143–44; my translation).

Familiarity, it seems, must have come with time. That Prince Albert went on to use the classification scheme introduced to him by Becker in 1853 in both Balmoral Library and eventually in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle would seem strongly to suggest that he felt at home in using it and that he wished to continue to do so. In order to create an useful, well-ordered information resource for the monarchy, therefore, the Prince Consort chose a conveniently modern classification scheme with which he and his family were already fully conversant.

## 5 Conclusions

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### 5.1 Research Findings

The aim of this study was to gain a more detailed understanding of the contexts and influences that went into shaping the plans for the redevelopment of the Royal Library from the 1860s. As previously commented upon in Section 1.3 on the methodology for this research, studies of library history have at times suffered from an all-too institutionally-focussed, progressivist narrative, whereby the different past instantiations of a particular collection have been as leading inexorably up to the modernity as represented by that institution in the present. Such a perspective disregards much of the best work in the field of book and collection history, which seeks to situate the realia of the contents and organisation of libraries in the past within the social experience and aspirations of those who created and used them. Prior studies of Prince Albert's involvement in the redevelopment of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle have focussed on detailed presentation of the known facts without, it would seem, seeking to carry the analysis over into a discussion of the contexts within which the Prince and his librarian were working, above in connection with how they envisaged the library they were creating, in the 1860s. Although this study has not been able to answer all of the questions posed at the beginning of this project, for reasons which will be discussed in more detail in a moment, it has nonetheless taken the first steps towards understanding the rationale behind the reforms introduced and the way in which these can be seen to reflect the shifting significance of the Royal Library *as a library* in the nineteenth century.

### 5.1.1 *Background and Nature of the Reforms*

At the time of its foundation in the 1830s, the Royal Library at Windsor Castle was initially intended to make up for the loss of the book collections belonging to King George III upon their transfer to the British Museum. Its first librarian, John Glover, was authorised by King William IV to follow an expansive (and expensive) acquisitions policy, seemingly in a bid to recreate something akin to his father's former collection, the result being that the library grew to over 30,000 books in just a few years. Purchasing on an enthusiastic scale continued during the early years of the reign of Queen Victoria and to an even greater extent after her marriage to Prince Albert in 1840. Although Glover—who had spent some time at the British Museum and was trained in cataloguing—had attempted to keep up with the task of recording the contents of the library, his efforts appear for the most part of have been diverted to other matters during the 1840s and 1850s, possibly in aiding Prince Albert to organise the Print Room collections. Even so, at some point during this period he had ceased trying to compile a multi-volume manuscript catalogue and had begun the preparation of a slip-catalogue of the contents of the library; by the time of his death in 1860 he had managed to transcribe the titles of around half the volumes in the collection, although the books themselves remained as yet unclassified.

Much of what we know about Glover's management of the library comes from the reports of his predecessor, Woodward, written in the 1860s. Woodward was clearly eager to be the new broom in the library and was supported enthusiastically by the Prince Consort, who had leapt at the chance to bring order to this part of the royal collections as he had done to the contents of the Print Room in the previous decade. His appointment of Woodward also brought with it the prospect of connections to other prominent libraries at the time and, one might additionally presume, the insights of an outsider with a fresh perspective on what was most current in the library world. At only three years the Prince's senior, Woodward would have seemed just the man to share Albert's enthusiasm and energy regarding the task ahead, and the Prince appears to have been heavily involved in directing and discussing the plans for the library. Much of the suggestions put forward for ways to reform the library in Woodward's *First Report* are aimed at bringing the collection in line with the examples offered by the British Museum Library and other London-based collections, notably the classified arrangements that had become the norm in places such as the Royal Institution and the London Library, both of which Albert was familiar with. The suggestions made in the reports concerning cataloguing, the appearance and security of the collection, and its classification all suggest evidence for this view. What is more, the views expressed by Woodward (and presumably shared by the Prince

Consort) regarding the future development of the collection demonstrate that it was envisaged as a useful, comprehensive and practical information resource for a monarchy that was becoming increasingly aware that it needed to know about its subjects and dominions, but also about the world in general.

### *5.1.2 Influences and Models*

Looking outside the walls of the Royal Library at Windsor to the broader themes in the history of libraries in the nineteenth century, one rapidly becomes aware of the number of connections that exist between this institution and those to which it looked as benchmarks. The main objective of Woodward's reports is to make the Royal Library a 'modern' library, with a comprehensive catalogue, clearly delineated collections and procedures, and a systematic classification of its contents as an aid to retrieval and use. In this, he was following the general nineteenth-century vision of what a well-ordered and efficiently run library should entail, a view which was manifested in the British Museum Library above all others. Indeed, it is to the staff of the British Museum that Woodward seems to have turned for advice regarding the catalogue, and the example of the Museum provides the standard against which the work on the Royal Library is to be measured.

Influences to the work on the Library came from a number of other sources, including the various repositories in London and elsewhere who had begun to publish catalogues of their holdings in the 1840s and 1850s. The organisation of libraries, a live topic in the 1850s, was also apparently on Prince Albert's mind during the same period, since it was during this time that he established several other library collections, including those in Osborne House and Balmoral, for the Army officers at Aldershot, and for his servants and estate hands at Windsor and in Scotland. He was likewise influenced in his choice of classification scheme for the new Royal Library by the one used in his own private library and at Balmoral; this system, while containing many features that would have recommended it to him by its own merits, was in fact introduced to the Prince by chance when he happened to employ a Dr Ernst Becker from Darmstadt to act as his private librarian. That this was the classification he went on to urge Woodward to use in the Royal Library says a great deal about the practical nature of the Prince Consort; it also suggests that he felt it important that the collection should be easy to use, both for himself and his family, for whose education the library was to play an important role.

## 5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

The nature of a study such as this one leads almost inevitably to questions unanswered and sources unexamined. One of the most important sources for the work carried out on the Royal Library are, of course, the books themselves, which would reveal a great deal more regarding the changes to the collection undertaken by the Prince Consort and Woodward than the current study, based on the literature, has been able to show. Another is the documentary evidence supplied by the Privy Purse bills regarding expenditure on the library, which are now in the Royal Archives. Although much has been digitised in recent years by the Royal Archives in connection with the Georgian Papers Programme, the Victorian material has not as yet been made available. This is due to change in the coming years, since in April 2018 the Royal Collection Trust announced that it would be creating an online archive of the personal papers belonging to Prince Albert, among them his diaries. Using access to these sources, another study would be able to tell a great deal more regarding Albert's plans for the Library, no doubt, than is currently possible. Another potential further study would be to examine the reluctance of library historians to write on the importance of books and libraries to the monarchy in general during the Victorian period, as touched on in the methodology chapter of the current project.

## 5.3 Reflection

This project was undertaken with a view to discovering more about Prince Albert's involvement in the Royal Library, a topic in which I had become fascinated while working in the library. Above all, I remember being intrigued when I learnt about the fact of his having re-classified the entire library into subject categories. How had he chosen the system? And what criteria does a monarch require from a library for it to be useful?

In an attempt to answer this question, I began to look for potential models and influences that I could point to which might indicate where Albert and Woodward got their ideas. The problem soon arose, however, that due to the vast nature of the changes involved in nineteenth-century libraries, looking for such models quickly became unmanageable unless one was willing to define strict criteria about what kinds of library would be examined. The initial idea was to include private libraries in the survey; however, given the range and degree of variability (even idiosyncrasy) involved in these types of collection, I decided to leave these for another study. Writing the project has also been a welcome lesson in structuring an

historical narrative and in selecting and analysing sources. I have also particularly enjoyed the opportunity to think about questions involving the way in which history is written and what the appropriate focus for an historical investigation might be. I hope, although I am not entirely convinced, that I have got it right.

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## **Appendix – Original Research Proposal**

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### **Working Title**

Contextualising the reorganisation of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle under Prince Albert

### **Introduction**

This research project aims to investigate the historical and cultural context of the redevelopment of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle carried out in the 1860s by Prince Albert, the German consort to Queen Victoria, and his newly-appointed Royal Librarian, Bernard Bolingbroke Woodward. The plans drawn up by these two men had a profound and lasting influence on the arrangement and management of this collection, which still represents the official library of the British monarchy. Albert, above all, appears to have acted as the driving force behind the work on the Royal Library, which saw (among other things) the introduction of a subject-based system of classification and efforts made to compile the first card catalogue of the collection. Despite the Prince's untimely death in December 1861, the direction he helped set for the future development of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle was nevertheless maintained by Woodward and his successors up to the end of the century and beyond (Everett 2002).

This project will attempt to situate the plans for the reorganisation of the Royal Library within the wider landscape of library history in the mid-nineteenth century. It will be pursued through an historical study by means of an extended literature review.

### **Aims and objectives**

The overall aim of this research project is to arrive at a more detailed understanding of the rationale behind Prince Albert's and Woodward's plans to reorganise the Royal Library at Windsor Castle and to determine what they can reveal about the changing purpose of the collection in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

The objectives of this research project are as follows:

1. to identify the nature of the changes made by Albert and Woodward to the arrangement of the Royal Library and the models which they chose to follow (as found, for example, in contemporary printed literature on library management, influences from other libraries at the time, and so forth);
2. to assess the significance of these changes within their broader historical context, determining to what extent the redevelopment of the Royal Library can be seen as reflective of contemporary trends concerning the organisation of (above all private and aristocratic) libraries in the nineteenth century and answering the question: "what conception of the Library and its function were Albert and Woodward working with?"; and
3. to analyse what Albert's vision for the Royal Library and its subsequent development suggests about his views concerning the role of the collection and its importance for the functioning of the monarchy in the burgeoning information age of the 1850s and 1860s.

## Scope and definition

This research project primarily covers the changes made to the Royal Library at Windsor Castle in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, both during and immediately after the lifetime of Prince Albert (1819-1861), with a particular focus on the organisation of the collection and its significance as an information resource for the monarchy. Since work on the Library carried on after Albert's death, with the Librarian, Bernard Woodward, continuing to implement the Prince's plans for the rearrangement of the collection, it seems appropriate to use the year 1868 as the cut-off, as this was the year Woodward himself died. It is also worth noting that this period also saw the beginnings of more recognisably 'modern' ideas regarding library organisation, with the first edition of Melvil Dewey's classification scheme being published in 1876: another date which could reasonably act as an upper chronological limit to the project.

The history of the collection which was to become known as "the Royal Library at Windsor Castle" begins in the early 1830s, when it was officially established by William IV (d. 1837). Formed from the combined remnants of a number of smaller libraries belonging to various members of the Royal Family, the collection also included several hundred books which had been acquired by George III (d. 1820), and which had escaped inclusion in the gift made in 1823 of the so-called King's Library to the British Museum by his son, George IV (d. 1830). Moreover, several items that had been sold off by the Museum as duplicates had by this time also found their way back into the collection, including a number of books from the "Old" Royal Library, which had been given to the nation in 1757 by George II (d. 1760) (Patterson 1996). Although the focus of this project is on the development of the collection post-1830, reference to these earlier instantiations of the Royal Library may also be included as appropriate.

## Research context/literature review

Since this research project will itself be conducted in the form of an extended literature review, the following is necessarily a more cursory summary of the literature on the topic by comparison and instead represents a number of 'starting-off' points for further research.

There is a relatively substantial body of research on the history and significance of book collections belonging to British monarchs, of which the vast majority deals with the period of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. It was during this time, of course, that the two major royal collections which went on to form part of the holdings of the British Museum—that is, the Old Royal Library, dating back to the reign of Edward IV (1442-1483), and the King's Library belonging to George III—were actively being acquired and used by their royal owners. Studies of the historical development of these libraries are therefore very often closely connected with what might be called the institutional 'pre-history' of the British Library, which emerged as the de facto national collection of the United Kingdom over the course of the nineteenth century (a function taken on elsewhere in Europe by former Royal Libraries, such as those in France or Denmark) (Lerner 2009; Birrell 1987; Harris 2009).

By contrast, there have been noticeably fewer studies of British royal book collections in the nineteenth century or, indeed, of the importance of book collecting and libraries to the monarchy during the reign of Queen Victoria. This is somewhat surprising, given the rise in the availability and cultural significance of libraries and information services in general in the period. Indeed, the years 1830-1900 are generally viewed as the time when most of the foundations of the modern information revolution were laid (Wellmer and Bawden 2005). Given the demonstrable interest in industry and technological change which was shown by the monarchy and, above all, by Prince Albert, whose plans for the 1851 Great Exhibition were



aimed at providing a platform to showcase many of newest advances of the age, it would seem that further research on the contemporary development and use of the royal private library is long overdue.

A cursory glance at the relevant literature on the subject suggests that research on the history of libraries in the nineteenth century has tended to focus on the growth of institutions directed towards the provision of information for all, particularly in the years leading up to the passing of the Public Libraries Act of 1850, and on the importance of major collections such as the British Museum Library and the London Library—founded by Thomas Carlyle in 1841, with Prince Albert as its patron—to the intellectual and cultural life of the capital (Battles 2004; Lerner 2009). By contrast, as Potten (2015) notes, comparatively little attention has been paid to the arrangement and function of aristocratic private libraries in the same period. It is into this latter category which the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, as the private library intended for use by the Sovereign (and her husband), might arguably be seen to fit. In my analysis, therefore, I will draw upon the growing body of recent work by scholars interested in re-interpreting the history of elite private libraries (Pearson 2016; Potten 2015; Purcell 2017) in order to determine the significance of the reforms instigated by Prince Albert in the Royal Library and what they reveal about the Prince's intentions for the collection.

Several descriptions of the Royal Library at Windsor Castle and its history have appeared in print over the last thirty years, including those by Patterson (1996) and Everett (2002; see also the introductory chapter by the same author in Birrell 1987). Each of these makes reference to the part played by Prince Albert in reorganising the Royal Library in the 1860s, although very little detail is given in these accounts regarding the factors which influenced the Prince and the models he used to arrange and develop the collection. Similarly, the equally brief overviews of Albert's involvement with the Royal Library given by Wright and Owens (2007) and Wright (2010)—the latter as part of the catalogue of an exhibition which focussed on the collecting habits of Victoria and Albert, including their books—do little to situate his work on the collection within the broader context of library history in the nineteenth century.

In addition, Bernard Woodward, the Prince's Royal Librarian, left detailed accounts in the form of official reports to the Queen regarding what was being done in the Library. These are now in the Royal Archives, but transcriptions of them are published by Everett (2002). While they form much of the basis for later accounts, there is a substantial amount of detail in these documents (including decisions on classification schemes, cataloguing procedures, and day-to-day management of the Library) which remains underexplored by scholars.

Historical accounts of Prince Albert's life, while typically mentioning his interest in art history and his efforts to organise and catalogue the royal art collections, give almost no space to his interest in books and libraries (Weintraub 1997; Hobhouse 1983). Nevertheless, numerous references to the purchase of books and arrangements for the financing and administration of libraries in Albert's German dukedom of Coburg and Gotha (including the establishment there of a library dedicated to the works of Protestant theologian Martin Luther) appear in documents now in the Royal Archive, a handlist of which can be found in Bosbach et al (2015). The recently-announced project to digitise Prince Albert's personal papers in the Royal Collection will no doubt increase the number of resources which researchers can draw upon in studying the man and his work (Royal Collection Trust 2018), although it is unlikely that this will be ready in time to be of use for the current study.

## Methodology

This research project will be carried out through an historical study of the topic by means of an extended literature review. Additional primary, archival source material, will also be used where appropriate, in order to elucidate individual points in the narrative. This research method is the one most suited to answering the research questions outlined above, first of all because of the historical nature of the proposed topic, and second because it involves the evaluation of a number of different kinds of documentary evidence, drawn from both primary and secondary sources, rather than the collection and interpretation of large quantities of quantitative data (Pickard 2013).

The primary aim of historical study might be said to involve the piecing together of a narrative concerning events which happened in the past from the evidence available, whilst at the same time making informed judgements regarding their wider meaning and impact. As with all forms of qualitative analysis, a certain level of subjectivity on the part of the researcher is inevitable. Since the sources that provide the historical researcher with their information need to be carefully analysed in order to determine their trustworthiness and relevance, with the main instrument of that analysis being the person of the researcher themselves, it is necessary to be fully aware of one's own preconceptions and biases when going about this process of interpretation (Pickard 2013). Through a careful and thorough approach to the evidence, I hope to avoid too much subjectivity in my own analysis.

## **Dissemination**

As part of the research project, I plan to disseminate my work in the following ways:

1. During my research period I will publish a series of three linked blog posts, either through my personal blog, begun as part of my time at City or alternatively via a dedicated project blog and web page, accompanied by full bibliographies, links to other websites and projects, and so forth. Each of the three posts will focus on a different aspect of the topic and will be written in a more accessible style than the dissertation itself, acting as the public face of the project on the web.
2. Following completion of the dissertation, I intend to upload it onto an Open Access digital repository, the most likely candidate being the CityLIS section of the Humanities Commons repository.
3. Finally, towards in the latter stages of the dissertation or after it has been submitted, I will turn at least part of my research on the project into a conference paper and attempt to get it accepted for an upcoming conference on library and information history

## **Work plan**

Due to the methodology outlined above, this project does not require an overly-strict plan of work; as a piece of desk research, it does not involve the collection and processing of large amounts of quantitative data or any time spent waiting to receive responses to a survey or set of interviews. It may indeed be beneficial to begin with a less than rigid idea of how long each section of the project will take, in order to allow myself to make (hopefully serendipitous) connections between sources and ideas whilst reading the literature. Nonetheless, always taking into account the fact that it is relatively easy to get distracted from the main topic when engaging in historical research (Pickard 2013), and given the likely pressures on my time from employment and family responsibilities, the following preliminary division of the work over the coming 7 months to January 2019 seems appropriate for the time being.

June	Reviewing literature					
July	Reviewing literature					
August		Models and influences in detail [blog post 1]				
September		Models and influences	Comparisons to other libraries [blog post 2]			
October			Comparisons to other libraries	Importance to monarchy [blog post 3]	Writing up	
November					Writing up	
December					Writing up	Submit

While I envisage the main writing-up process to begin in late October, I intend to write sections of the dissertation throughout the research period over the summer, above all when it comes to the literature review. This will not only help me to spread out the task of writing, but will also enable me to work on my analysis and ideas as I go along.

## Resources

The resources needed to carry out this research project are relatively minimal. As I live near to—and work in—Cambridge, I have ready access to Cambridge University Library, which, along with the British Library in London, will most likely contain all of the relevant sources of information on the topic that I am not able to access online.

I am considering a trip to Windsor to visit the Royal Archives, in order to consult archival papers and other documents held there which might further elucidate the history of the Royal Library and Prince Albert's involvement with it. This would, of course, enhance greatly the range of sources I could draw upon in order to answer the research questions I have outlined above. As a former employee of the Royal Household, I have a good knowledge of the institution and I am quite confident that my admission to the Royal Archives as a researcher should not present too much of a problem, and I have already been in contact with staff in Windsor to arrange this. While this trip is not ultimately crucial to the conduct of my research,

it would at least help to flesh out some of the information available in published form regarding the Prince's intentions regarding the reorganisation of the Royal Library.

## **Ethics**

After reviewing the Ethics Checklist for LIS Masters projects carried out under the direction of the Department of Library and Information Science within City, University of London, I can state that my answers to the questions in Part A are all "no"; an application to the Senate Research Ethics Committee for permission to proceed is not required.

This research involves individual desk research only; there are no other participants, and so there are no ethical considerations that apply, save for those surrounding academic misconduct and plagiarism on my part. I will therefore follow the Postgraduate School Handbook's guidance on avoiding academic misconduct and plagiarism through proper referencing.

## **Confidentiality**

I do not foresee any confidentiality issues arising from this research project, with the one exception that any archival sources from the Royal Archives which I choose to cite must be done so only with the permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. In order to avoid any issues regarding this, I will seek guidance from the archivists and staff members in the Archives. On the other hand, the rest of the literature reviewed will either all be already published or easily accessible to me as a university student. As stated above, the project does not require any external participants to be carried out.

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